



CHAPTER XXIII.

The very first minutes of the hour of parting have come, and Eric Lowell's friends—his dearest ones—all about him. His mother, his cousin Harriet, and his host, Edith Cameron.

"I—I thought you had gone?" she gasps, trying to keep her feet from leaving the room and her hands from clutching the door.

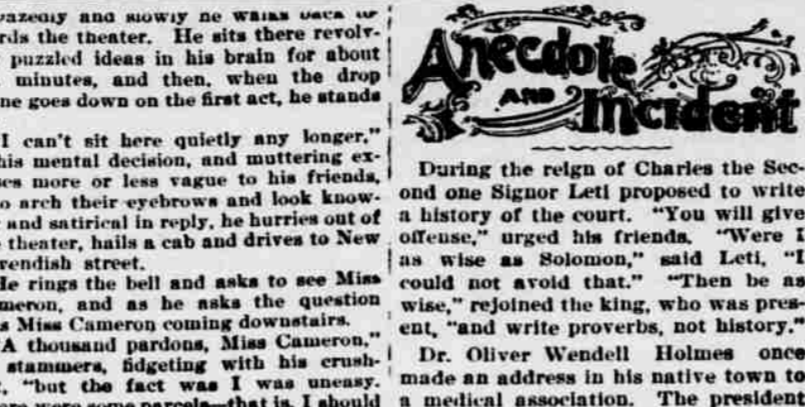
"What have I done to make you laugh like that?" she asks, looking at the man who is laughing so heartily at her expense.

"I can sit in here, and rest, and see the play. It will be delightful, and I am so tired, and I won't go back to that house."

"For heaven's sake!" he says, the sweat starting on his brow for very shame and distress, "don't behave in this insane manner."

"I must go!" he says, hastily. "Kiss me, Muriel! No, dear, don't hold me!"

"My dear girl!" he says, looking at her with a smile, "I shall never see you again, it will be my last parting."



CHAPTER XXIV.

Young Muriel Tweedley, unhappy bride, stands alone in the room, her hands clasped in prayer.

"I really cannot tell you, Captain Levenson," she answers, "I do not think I can tell you anything."

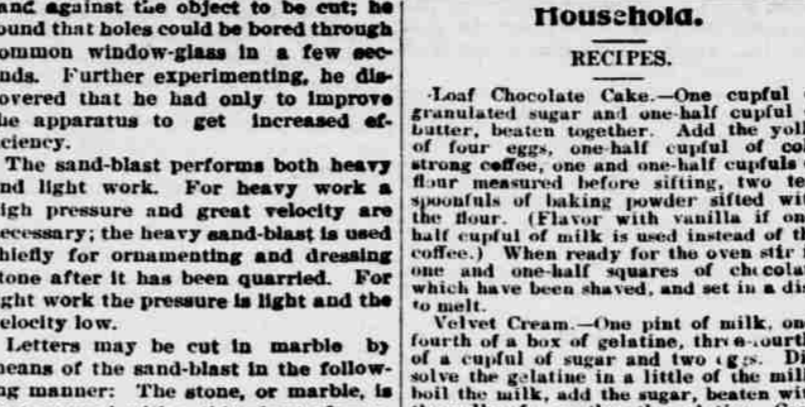
"I met her in the Coronet Theater," he answers, lowering his voice also, and letting his eyes fall on the floor.

"I can sit in here, and rest, and see the play. It will be delightful, and I am so tired, and I won't go back to that house."

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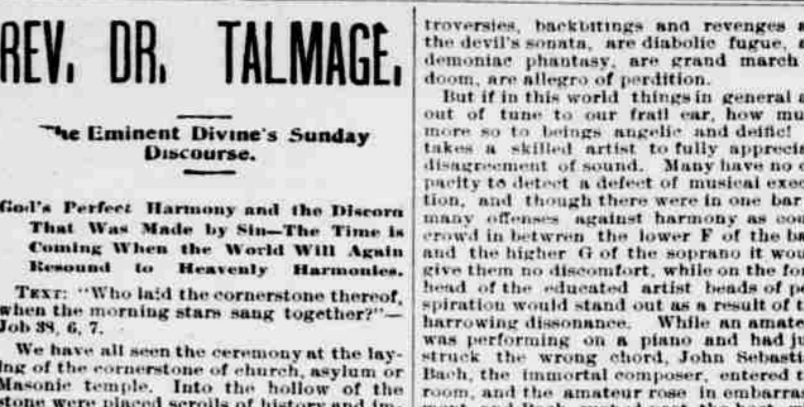
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